

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated December 20, 2005, Claims 35-54 are pending. Claims 35-46 were withdrawn. Claims 47-54 are rejected. Claims 47, 48, 50, and 52-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Krichever (US 5,988,502). Claims 47, 48, and 50-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Metlitsky (US 5,545,886) in view of Suzuki (US 6,172,788). Claim 49 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Metlitsky in view of Suzuki and in further view of Obata (US 5,597,997).

Claims 35-46 are hereby canceled. Claims 55-58 are new. Claims 47 and 53 are amended.

35 U.S.C. § 102(b) Rejection of Claims 47, 48, 50, and 52-54.

The examiner has not shown Krichever to disclose “at least one beam scanner aligned to receive the plurality of beams and operable to scan the beams in respective two-dimensional patterns arranged in abutting and substantially non-overlapping respective regions of a field of view, wherein each region comprises a plurality of immediately adjacent and substantially parallel scan lines” as recited by claim 47 (as amended).

The applicant notes that the portion of Krichever cited by the examiner states: “the laser beams may if desired be directed onto two separate regions within the field of view.” The applicant does not agree that “it is clear from a reading of col. 9 lines 17-36 that each non-overlapping scan region is comprised of a plurality of immediately adjacent scan lines such as those shown in fig. 10”, as asserted by the examiner. Within the cited text, Krichever is silent with respect to whether the “two separate regions” are “non-overlapping”, whether they are “comprised of a plurality of immediately adjacent and substantially parallel scan lines”, whether they are “abutting”, or whether the beams are scanned in “two-dimensional patterns,” each limitation being recited by claim 47.

With respect to the examiner’s citing of Figure 10 [sic], the applicant does not see any evidence of each region comprising “a plurality of immediately adjacent and substantially parallel scan lines” as recited by claim 47. Rather, the applicant sees in

Figure 10a a starburst pattern with substantial overlap among the scan lines making up the starburst pattern. In Figure 10b the applicant sees a series of parallel single scan lines that are not immediately adjacent and where presumably each “region” is made of only a single scan line rather than “a plurality of immediately adjacent and substantially parallel scan lines” as recited by claim 47. In Figure 10c the applicant sees only a single scan line.

The applicant believes that claim 47 as amended is allowable over Krichever for at least the reasons given above. Claims 48, 50, and 52 depend from claim 47 and are also allowable for at least the reasons given for claim 47.

Claim 53 (as amended) recites “at least two beam scanners operable to sweep respective beams in two-dimensional scan patterns across respective substantially non-overlapping regions of a field of view, wherein each region comprises a plurality of immediately adjacent scan lines;.” The examiner has not shown Krichever to disclose this structure. Specifically, the applicant can find no evidence that the regions are “substantially non-overlapping” nor that “each region comprises a plurality of immediately adjacent scan lines”, nor that the beams are swept in respective “two-dimensional scan patterns” each of which is recited by claim 53.

For at least the reasons given above, claim 53 is allowable over Krichever. Claim 54 depends from claim 53 and is allowable for at least the reasons given for claim 53.

35 U.S.C. § 103(b) Rejection of Claims 47, 48, and 50-54

The applicant believes it improper to combine Metlitsky with Suzuki because they are non-analogous art. Metlitsky discloses a bar code scanner. Suzuki discloses an exposure unit for a laser printer. It would be especially non-obvious to combine the references to provide a particular scan pattern since the scanned surfaces and operational environments are so different.

The examiner has not shown either Metlitsky or Suzuki to disclose “at least one beam scanner aligned to receive the plurality of beams and operable to scan the beams in respective two-dimensional patterns arranged in abutting and substantially non-overlapping respective regions of a field of view, wherein each region comprises a

plurality of immediately adjacent and substantially parallel scan lines” as recited by claims 47 (as amended). In particular, the applicant believes the Suzuki scan pattern is linear with a second effective axis being created by the transport of the photoconductor drum past the scan line. Such an arrangement clearly does not disclose “two-dimensional scan patterns” as recited by claim 47.

Claim 47 is allowable because neither Metlitsky nor Suzuki, alone or in combination, disclose all its limitations. Claim 48 and 50-52 depend from claim 47 and are allowable for at least the reasons given for claim 47.

Claim 53 recites “at least two beam scanners operable to sweep respective beams in two-dimensional scan patterns across respective substantially non-overlapping regions of a field of view, wherein each region comprises a plurality of immediately adjacent scan lines.” Metlitsky specifically does not disclose “two-dimensional scan patterns across respective substantially non-overlapping regions of a field of view” as recited by claim 53. The applicant notes that the regions scanned by the respective beams are illustrated as being interleaved rather than “substantially non-overlapping”. As discussed above, Suzuki also does not disclose or reasonably suggest “two dimensional scan patterns across substantially non-overlapping regions of a field of view.”

Claim 53 is allowable for at least the reasons given above. Claim 54 depends from claim 53 and is allowable for at least the reason given for claim 53.

35 U.S.C. § 103(b) Rejection of Claim 49

Claim 49 depends from claim 47. Obata does not supply the missing limitations described above. Claim 49 is therefore allowable for at least the reasons given for claim 47.

The applicant believes this amendment and remarks to be fully responsive to the Office Action dated December 20, 2005. It is respectfully submitted that the claims are now in condition for issuance. Applicant respectfully requests the examiner to grant issuance with claims as now amended. The Examiner is invited to call Mr. Chris Wiklof at (425) 882-6641 with any issues that may advance prosecution of the application on the merits. Applicant submits that no new matter is being submitted.

Application No. 10/802,512
Response Dated April 20, 2006
Reply to Office Action Dated December 20, 2005

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees due by way of this
Amendment, or credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0284.

Respectfully submitted,



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CAW:kje

Enclosures:

Postcard
Transmittal Form PTO/SB/21
Petition for One-Month Extension of Time (+ copy)
Change of Correspondence Address PTO/SB/122

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